

REMARKS

Claims 1-30 are pending in the present application. Claims 8-10 are amended. Claims 1-7, 13, 19, and 25 are independent.

The Examiner has required an election in the present application between:

Species A: A First Embodiment, as disclosed in the specification page 11, lines 6-12;

Species B: A Second Embodiment, as disclosed in the specification page 11, lines 13-19;

Species C: A Third Embodiment, as disclosed in the specification page 11, lines 20-25;

Species D: A Fourth Embodiment, as disclosed in the specification page 11, line 26 to page 12, line 5;

Species E: A Fifth Embodiment, as disclosed in the specification page 12, lines 6-12;

Species F: A Sixth Embodiment, as disclosed in the specification page 12, lines 13-19;

Species G: A Seventh Embodiment, as disclosed in the specification page 12, lines 20-26.

For the purpose of examination of the present application, Applicants elect, with traverse, Species G, including independent claim 7 and dependent claims 8-12.

The Examiner states that claims 8-30 are generic.

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

At the outset, it is respectfully submitted that the present application entered into the national phase before the USPTO based on a PCT application. Thus, the rules that apply to the present application with regard to unity of invention are set forth in 37 CFR §§ 1.475 to 1.477.

As set forth in 37 CFR § 1.475(a), an international and a national stage application shall relate to one invention only or to a group of inventions so linked as to form a single general inventive concept. On August 29, 2005, when the present application was filed in the USPTO, the Examiner was provided with a copy of the International Search Report. In this report, the International Bureau maintained all of the claims in a single application based on the fact that the claims were so linked so as to form a single general inventive concept.

It is respectfully submitted that the present application does include claims that are so linked so as to form a single general inventive concept. The Examiner contends that there is a lack of unity of invention stating that the seven embodiments are identified in the specification. It is respectfully submitted that this contention is not believed to be tenable in view of the fact that the International Search Report did maintain all of the claims in a single application. Thus, claims 1-30 should be considered in a single application. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider his election of species requirement.

The provisions of 37 CFR 1.146 state that a reasonable number of species are permitted in a single application. The present application contains seven species. It is respectfully submitted that if the Examiner allows the generic claims then all of the claims should be

allowable in view of the fact that a reasonable number of species are set forth in the present application.

In order to be responsive to the Examiner's election of species requirement, claims 7 and 8-12 have been initially elected. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the election of species requirement and act on all of the claims in the present application. If the Examiner does persist in the election of species requirement, Applicants reserve the right to file a divisional application directed to the non-elected claims at a later date if they so desire.

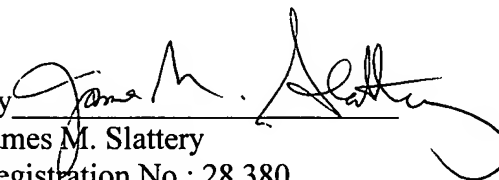
CONCLUSION

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Carl T. Thomsen (Reg. No. 50,786) at 703-208-4030 (direct line), to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

By 

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